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Congress of the United States

U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

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September 16, 2010

The Honorable Sander M. Levin
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Levin,

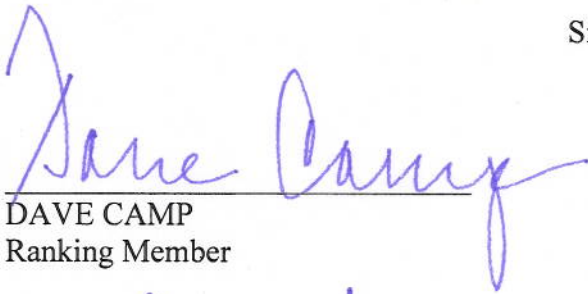
As you know, on July 14, 2010, the Republican members of the Committee requested that you invite Dr. Donald Berwick, Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), to testify before the Committee to discuss ways in which he intends to protect the health care benefits of America's seniors. We are eager to hear his plans for CMS, because Medicare's own actuaries predict that the one-half trillion dollars in cuts to Medicare in the recently enacted health law could result in providers no longer treating seniors, jeopardizing their access to care. On July 22, 2010, you indicated a willingness to have Dr. Berwick before the Committee "after Dr. Berwick has been in office for a period of time."

Dr. Berwick has now been in his position for more than two months and has begun engaging in public debate on the impact he believes these Medicare cuts will have on America's seniors. Specifically, he wrote an Op-Ed which appeared in the Washington Post last week claiming that "Under the [Democrats' health law], Medicare is stronger than it has been in years, and seniors will get new benefits," and "seniors will pay less for prescription drugs." Such claims have been questioned by the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office and the independent Government Accountability Office. The Administrator also spoke at a conference this week sponsored by health insurance companies regarding "the Administration's priorities for the implementation of health care reform, including changes under the Medicare program, and the agency's plans for meeting the challenges of the post reform health care system in 2011 and beyond." Earlier this week, President Obama again formally nominated Dr. Berwick to the CMS post.

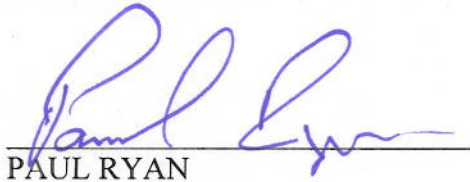
Given the importance of these issues and the fact Dr. Berwick has been CMS Administrator long enough to write opinion pieces and speak to trade associations, we ask that you invite him to testify before the Full Committee this month so that we can better understand the direction he intends to take the Medicare program at such a critical juncture.

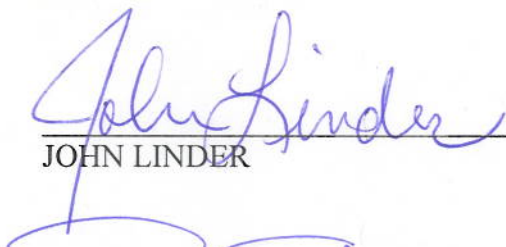
We appreciate your timely response to this matter.

Sincerely,

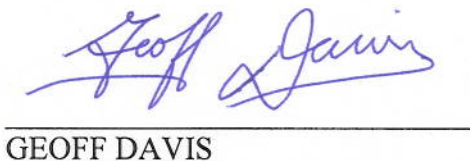

DAVE CAMP
Ranking Member


SAM JOHNSON


PAUL RYAN


JOHN LINDER

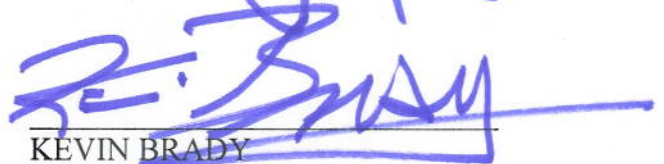

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